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ONLY REPLY TO
EMMA.WHITEHEAD@BASILDON.GOV.UK

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Date: Tue, 22 Jan 2008 07:53:25 +0000 (GMT)

From: "Dale Farm" <dale.farm@btinternet.com>

Subject: Re: DALE FARM : AN ALTERNATIVE

To: Emma.Whitehead@basildon.gov.uk

Dear Ms Whitehead,
Thank you for your message concerning the various
points raised and I await your fuller reply.

Meanwhile, we met yesterday with the Red Cross
and need a couple of clarifications arising out of our
discussion with them.

Our proposals concerned the need for emergency shelter
for those rendered homeless in the event that Basildon
council destroys the 90 homes at Dale Farm (you will
shortly have the result of the latest council as Mr Corsten
was doing one yesterday).

If the eviction takes place in summer, we proposal to
set up a Tent City on nearby pasture land.

(I have already written to Mr Simpson concerning
planning regulations and the need to waive these)

If winter, Reception Centres, utilizing two parish
halls, will be set up in Wickford.

In response, the Red Cross was able to donate one
tent for our stockpile for the Tent City (and informed
us large numbers of tents are kept in Bristol).

For the Tent City and/or the Reception Centres
they would be able supply transport for the chronically

ill (and use of wheel chairs), sleeping bags and other necessities.

However, we were informed that while the Red Cross locally has limited resources to meet such an emergency, Basildon council could be called upon to supply larger numbers of such necessities as blankets and bedding from stocks held.

Please could you therefore add to our list of questions, the following:

- 1) What quantities of blankets and other bedding does Basildon council hold in stock for emergencies?
- 2) Do you also have Portaloos?
- 3) Field kitchens? Or Food stocks?
- 4) Any other supplies useful for families a) under canvas
b) sleeping in reception centres.
- 5) Would such supplies be available for families made homeless by the Dale Farm Eviction on receipt of a request by a) the Red Cross, b) Essex Fire & Rescue, c) the Catholic Church.

Yours sincerely,
Grattan Puxon
Dale Farm Housing Association

Emma.Whitehead@basildon.gov.uk wrote:

Dear Mr Puxon

We are in receipt of all your email. A response is being worked on but as there are a number of points that you would like answered, we are having to coordinate with numerous colleagues to obtain the information required.

I hope to be able to send a response to you by the end of the week..

Emma

Emma Whitehead
Project Officer
Development, Property & Health
Basildon District Council

01268 294509
emma.whitehead@basildon.gov.uk

Dale Farm <dale.farm@btinternet.com>
08/01/2008 10:51

To
carla.vivekanandan@basildon.gov.uk
cc

Subject
DALE FARM : AN ALTERNATIVE

DALE FARM: AN ALTERNATIVE

8 January 2008

Dear Carla,

1. While addressing this correspondence to you, we are well aware that other officers and departments will need to be consulted on the ideas being put forward here, and thank you for facilitating this.
2. Having had the advantage of the holidays to think more deeply, and to talk among ourselves, we have come up with a fresh proposal. It is a proposal that would turn what could otherwise be a confrontation damaging to all parties into a relatively smooth transition.
3. But we have first to make clear that this proposal is put forward only as an alternative to our primary objectives. These are to secure a) permanent planning permission for all the presently unauthorised Dale Farm yards/plots, and failing that b) to obtain a three year temporary planning consent.
4. We continue to contend that our needs for accommodation, education, welfare and medical care outweigh zoning considerations, and that our right to the security and enjoyment of our homes is a paramount human right under international law.
5. However, we have noted Council leader Malcolm Buckley's often repeated statement that if and when legally permissible he intends to call in Constant & Co. to destroy our homes.
6. It is because of the possibility of a forced eviction attempt that I am mandated by a majority of our members to outline this alternative.

7. We understand that the eviction blue-print drawn up in 2005 is now to be reviewed, which makes this an opportune moment to think about a more creative and humane scenario.

8. What we suggest, essentially, is that instead of employing Constant to remove homes by force to storage at South Mimms (or other facilities), the same low-loaders and towing vehicles be used to transport mobile-homes, dismantled chalets and trailer caravans to the land at Terminus Drive, Pitsea.

9. This would be done with the consent and co-operation of the owners (reducing the need for a police presence).

10. We would ask that this transfer be undertaken at the council's expense (which might be considerably less than the cost of a forced eviction spread over many days) using funding already set aside for the direct action operation.

11. This suggestion is based on experience gained during a major eviction by Chelmsford Borough Council at the Meadowlands Caravan Park several years ago. Details can be confirmed by Ms Christine Lyons, in their legal department. On that occasion, with the consent of the council, Constant & Co. agreed that instead of removing caravans to storage they could be taken to a caravan park with vacancies at Epsom, Surrey.

12. Our Planning Appeal concerning the development of a caravan park at Terminus Drive has now been acknowledged by the Planning Inspectorate. Our side of the Inquiry (date yet to be fixed) will be conducted by Mr Brian Cox, of South West Law.

13. It would simply be necessary for the council to withdraw any objections to the granting of a temporary three year planning consent, and allow us to expand present plans for five permanent yards to a proposal for up to 50 temporary yards (most would need to be in double occupation).

14. This would enable the Dale Farm Housing Association, linked to an existing Registered Social Landlord, to establish temporary alternative facilities for all the families facing eviction at Dale Farm.

15. The Terminus Road caravan park would provide accommodation until say 2011, when according to Government estimates a sufficient number of permanent caravan parks (both council and private) will have been set up to meet the needs of all Travellers.

16. While putting forward this proposal, we are also doing our best to meet a second scenario; that is an emergency situation where families would have had their homes impounded by Constant and would be in need of temporary shelter.

17. To this end, we are meeting shortly with the Red Cross. Together with other charities, we would aim to set up tent accommodation near Dale Farm until the mobile-homes and trailer caravans can be brought back from South Mimms (or other storage facilities) and replace the tents and marquees.

18. In separate correspondence, I have asked Mr Clive Simpson to look into the possibility of waiving planning formalities for such emergency accommodation (as is done for other kinds of disasters). Or alternatively to grant temporary consent.

19. Lastly, should the council find some merit in this proposal, we would be asking Mr Iain Guest, of the Advocacy Project in Washington, who has experience of mediation in many countries, to meet with Mr Buckley and discuss details more fully.

Sincerely
Gratian Puxon
secretary
Dale Farm Housing Association

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